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# *Mortality from Certain Diseases Among Children Under 15 Years of Age, California, 1906-1934*

By Walter M. Dickie, M.D., Director, California State Department of Public Health

During the time that the California State Department of Public Health has been keeping statistics on deaths from the various communicable diseases, there have been reductions in rates among most of them.

As these communicable diseases affect children under the age of fifteen to a large extent, a special study of these reductions has been made by the Division of Vital Statistics, with interesting results. For these studies the period from birth to fifteen years of age has been divided into three groups: (1) under one year of age; (2) from one to four years of age; and (3) from five to fourteen years of age. The rates are based on the estimates of population for each age group, and the rates are computed per 100,000 population in each age group. The twenty-nine year period studied has been divided into one four-year and five five-year periods for ease in computation. These periods are 1906–1909 (4 years), 1910–1914, 1915–1919, 1920–1924, 1925–1929, and 1930–1934. A comparison of the rates in each five-year period is given for each disease studied.

### TYPHOID FEVER

Age group under 1. In the period 1906–1909 this group shows ten deaths with a death rate of 6.8 per 100,000 estimated population. This rises to 7.4 in the 5-year period 1910–1914, and then steadily declines until in 1930–1934 there is a death rate of 1.2 per 100,000 estimated population of this age group.

In age group 1–4, the death rate initially is much higher than in the age group under one year. This decreased in each subsequent five-year period, the greatest decrease coming between the second and third periods, until in 1930–1934 the death rate for this group is 0.9 deaths per 100,000 population of the age group. The actual numbers of deaths in this group falls from 102 during the first four years of the study to 16 during the last five years.

The progress in the age group 5–14 years has been similar to that in age group 1–4, but not nearly so marked. Beginning with 246 deaths during the first four years, the number of deaths for the last five years of the study is reduced to 85, with a corresponding reduction in death rates for the group from 18.6 per 100,000 population to 1.8 deaths from typhoid per 100,000 population.

Details of these changes are shown in the accompanying table.

**Deaths from Typhoid Fever by Age Groups, California, 1906–1934**

| Years | Under 1 | | 1–4 | | 5–14 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Rate | Number | Rate | Number | Rate |
| 1906–1909 | 10 | 6.8 | 102 | 18.1 | 246 | 18.6 |
| 1910–1914 | 16 | 7.4 | 117 | 13.8 | 241 | 12.3 |
| 1915–1919 | 8 | 3.1 | 44 | 4.3 | 139 | 5.7 |
| 1920–1924 | 9 | 3.0 | 54 | 4.4 | 129 | 4.1 |
| 1925–1929 | 5 | 1.4 | 17 | 1.1 | 80 | 2.0 |
| 1930–1934 | 5 | 1.2 | .6 | 0.9 | 85 | 1.8 |

### MALARIA

The occurrence of deaths from malaria, as from typhoid fever, has been greatly reduced in this state in all the age groups studied. Especially is this so in the age group under one, where it is reduced from a rate of 19.7 per 100,000 estimated children under one in the quadrennium 1906–1909 to 0.8 per 100,000 in the years 1930–1934. Numbers have been reduced from 29 in the earlier period to three during the last five years studied.

A similar picture is presented by ages 1–4, where the rate has been reduced from 3.9 in the earlier years to zero in the last five years. Numbers fall from 22 in 1906–1909 to zero in 1930–1934.

The reduction in age group 5–14 has not been so marked; beginning with a total of 21 cases and a rate of 1.6 per 100,000 population of this age group in 1906–1909, it rises slightly during the next five years to 38, or a rate of 1.9, and then falls rapidly to 4 deaths in 1930–1934, giving a rate of 0.1 per 100,000 estimated population. Details of these changes are shown in the accompanying table.

**Deaths from Malaria by Age Groups, California, 1906–1934**

| Years | Under 1 | | 1–4 | | 5–14 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Rate | Number | Rate | Number | Rate |
| 1906–1909 | 29 | 19.7 | 22 | 3.9 | 21 | 1.6 |
| 1910–1914 | 40 | 18.4 | 42 | 5.0 | 38 | 1.9 |
| 1915–1919 | 22 | 8.7 | 28 | 2.7 | 16 | 0.6 |
| 1920–1924 | 15 | 5.0 | 12 | 1.0 | 12 | 0.4 |
| 1925–1929 | 4 | 1.1 | 10 | 0.7 | 2 | 0.05 |
| 1930–1934 | 3 | 0.8 | ------ | ------ | 4 | 0.1 |

### SMALLPOX

This disease has never been responsible for many deaths in California, particularly among the younger age groups, and although we find a great deal of variation, in general, the rate has fallen somewhat. In the three age groups under study, the one comprising children under one shows the highest mortality rates. With seven deaths in the period 1906–1909 we find a death rate of 4.8 from smallpox. This falls to zero during the next five-year period then rises to 5.0 and gradually recedes to 0.8 during the last five years.

In the age group 1–4 the rate is nearly uniform over the entire period preceding 1929, but in the last five years it falls to 0.1 from 1.0 per 100,000 group population, during the preceding five years.

In actual number of deaths there is a change from 4 during 1906–1909 to a maximum of 15 during the five-year period 1925–1929, falling to 2 during the last five years.

The death rates in the 5–14 age group are fairly uniform over the whole period, rising to a high point of 0.4 per 100,000 estimated group population with 11 deaths during 1920–1924, then falling to 0.1 with one death in the last 5 years of the study.

**Smallpox, California, 1906–1934**

| Years | Under 1 year | | 1–4 years | | 5–14 years | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Rate | Number | Rate | Number | Rate |
| 1906–1909 | 7 | 4.8 | 4 | 0.7 | ------ | ------ |
| 1910–1914 | ------ | ------ | 6 | 0.7 | 4 | 0.2 |
| 1915–1919 | 2 | 0.8 | 7 | 0.7 | 5 | 0.2 |
| 1920–1924 | 15 | 5.0 | 11 | 0.9 | 11 | 0.4 |
| 1925–1929 | 15 | 4.3 | 15 | 1.0 | 9 | 0.2 |
| 1930–1934 | 3 | 0.8 | 2 | 0.1 | 1 | 0.1 |

### MEASLES

There have been fluctuations in deaths from measles within the different five-year periods, but in general there has been a cynical tendency downward. Children under one year of age have the highest death rate from this cause, although those dying between the ages of 1–4 years contribute the greater number of deaths. The number of children under one year of age dying from measles has varied from 152 with a rate of 103.2 per 100,000 estimated population in that group in 1906–1909, through a peak of 190 deaths with a death rate of 64.0 in 1920–1924 to 122 in 1930–1934 with a corresponding rate of 30.5 deaths from measles per 100,000 children under one.

The number of deaths each period among children 1–4 years of age is higher than in age group under 1 but the rates are uniformly lower. Beginning with 287 deaths, 1906–1909, and a rate of 50.8, it falls, but rises again in 1920–1924 to 526 deaths with a rate of 42.4. The next five years the rate falls, but rises slightly during the last five years of the study to a rate of 20.8 per 100,000 group population corresponding to 359 deaths.

In the age group 5–14 the number of deaths and the rates fall markedly below those of the earlier age groups. These are the children of school age, and while there is probably a large incidence of cases of the disease, the mortality rate falls markedly. Rates are more nearly uniform for the whole period under observation, varying from 6.6 with 87 deaths during 1906–1909 to 142 deaths with a corresponding rate of 3.1 per 100,000 age group population in 1930–1934.

**Mortality from Measles, 1906–1934**

| Years | Under 1 year | | 1–4 years | | 5–14 years | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Rate | Number | Rate | Number | Rate |
| 1906–1909 | 152 | 103.2 | 287 | 50.8 | 87 | 6.6 |
| 1910–1914 | 170 | 78.3 | 406 | 48.1 | 87 | 4.4 |
| 1915–1919 | 114 | 45.2 | 242 | 23.7 | 85 | 3.5 |
| 1920–1924 | 190 | 64.0 | 526 | 42.4 | 156 | 5.0 |
| 1925–1929 | 104 | 29.6 | 257 | 17.1 | 83 | 2.1 |
| 1930–1934 | 122 | 30.5 | 359 | 20.8 | 142 | 3.1 |

### SCARLET FEVER

The general tendency in mortality from scarlet fever has been downward throughout the period of study, although like measles, there is a rise in number of deaths and rates in all three age groups studied during the period 1920–1924. The rates fluctuate somewhat in all these groups, but in general they show a downward tendency.

The age group under 1 shows a lower death rate than is shown by either of the older age groups. Beginning with 14 deaths and a rate of 9.5 per 100,000 population the rates and numbers gradually fall during the next decade, but rise in the period 1920–1924 to 18 with a rate of 6.1 per 100,000 population of the group. During the next decade it reaches a low of five deaths from scarlet fever with a rate of 1.2 per 100,000 group population.

The age group 1–4 has a higher death rate. Beginning with 97 deaths from scarlet fever, a rate of 17.2, it rises to a high point of 162 deaths, with a corresponding rate of 19.2 per 100,000 group population in the next period. After a fall to a rate of 9.0 in 1915–1919, it again rises to a rate of 14.6 per 100,000 with a high point of 181 deaths. It then receded in the next two periods to a low of 5.3 per 100,000 group population.

The age for school children also shows a death rate somewhat higher than that for children under one year of age, but slightly lower than that for children one to four years of age. We find that at the beginning there are 137 deaths giving a mortality rate of 10.4 per 100,000 population and this goes to 172 with a rate of 5.5 per 100,000 population in 1920–25; dropping to 145 with a rate of 3.2 per 100,000 in 1930–1934.

**Mortality from Scarlet Fever, 1906–1934**

| Years | Under 1 year | | 1–4 years | | 5–14 years | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Rate | Number | Rate | Number | Rate |
| 1906–1909 | 14 | 9.5 | 97 | 17.2 | 137 | 10.4 |
| 1910–1914 | 11 | 5.1 | 162 | 19.2 | 146 | 7.4 |
| 1915–1919 | 8 | 2.3 | 92 | 9.0 | 88 | 3.6 |
| 1920–1924 | 18 | 6.1 | 181 | 14.6 | 172 | 5.5 |
| 1925–1929 | 6 | 1.7 | 94 | 6.3 | 126 | 3.2 |
| 1930–1934 | 5 | 1.2 | 91 | 5.3 | 145 | 3.2 |

### WHOOPING COUGH

This disease at the present time is the most fatal of the communicable diseases among children under 1 year of age. The case fatality rate is high, and the death rate is higher than for scarlet fever, diphtheria and tuberculosis among infants. Among the next age group, 1–4 years, it is still a major cause of death, but is exceeded by tuberculosis and diphtheria. In the age group 5–14 it has taken a very minor place among death-producing communicable diseases.

In 1906–1909, there were 380 deaths of infants under 1 year, giving the high rate of 258.1 deaths from whooping cough per 100,000 population of that age.

The next five-year period shows a rise to 618 deaths with a corresponding rate of 284.6 per 100,000 group population. We notice quite a rise in the number of deaths during the decade 1920–1929, but the mortality rate is somewhat lower than in the preceding 5-year period. In the period 1930–1934 the number again falls, with a corresponding decrease in rates. Despite these decreases in death rates, whooping cough has advanced from second place to first place among communicable diseases as a death dealing among infants.

In the age group 1–4, whooping cough remains in third place among communicable diseases in all the period study, but falls from a high point of 51.5 with 435 deaths in 1910–1914 to 17.7 and a total of 305 deaths in 1930–34. The largest number of deaths from this disease is in the period 1925–29 when 510 deaths from whooping cough occur. The population of the group has increased enough however, to keep the rate at 34.0 per 100,000 population.

(Continued in next issue)

## MORBIDITY

### Complete Reports for Following Diseases for Week Ending February 8, 1936

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### Chickenpox

536 cases: Alameda 3, Berkeley 18, Oakland 14, Piedmont 3, San Leandro 1, Amador County 1, Oroville 2, Pittsburg 5, Fresno County 13, Fresno 4, Imperial County 2, Brawley 1, Kern County 7, Kings County 2, Hanford 1, Los Angeles County 29, Alhambra 9, Arcadia 1, Burbank 2, Compton 3, Covina 1, Glendale 12, Huntington Park 7, Long Beach 11, Los Angeles 90, Pomona 1, San Gabriel 3, Santa Monica 3, South Pasadena 3, Vernon 1, Whittier 5, Torrance 1, Lynwood 1, South Gate 1, Bell 3, Mariposa County 1, Merced County 4, Orange County 13, Anaheim 3, Orange 1, Santa Ana 3, Placentia 4, Riverside County 4, Corona 2, Riverside 8, Sacramento 13, Hollister 1, San Bernardino County 1, Colton 2, Needles 6, Redlands 1, San Diego County 17, National City 3, San Diego 34, San Francisco 47, San Joaquin County 4, Lodi 1, Stockton 5, Tracy 4, San Luis Obispo County 5, San Luis Obispo 1, San Mateo County 4, Daly City 1, Santa Barbara County 6, Santa Barbara 2, Santa Maria 1, Santa Clara County 2, Gilroy 1, Palo Alto 4, San Jose 25, Santa Clara 1, Shasta County 3, Dunsmuir 2, Vacaville 1, Sonoma County 2, Stanislaus County 2, Modesto 3, Dinuba 2, Lindsay 2. Tuolumne County 4, Ventura County 5, Santa Paula 4, Woodland 7.

### Diphtheria

52 cases: Fresno County 1, Fresno 1, Imperial County 1, Brawley 4, El Centro 3, Kern County 1, Kings County 2, Los Angeles County 1, Glendale 1, Los Angeles 7, Redondo 1, Mendocino County 2, Orange County 1, Anaheim 1, Placentia 1, Sacramento County 1, Sacramento 3, Colton 1, San Bernardino 3, San Diego County 1, Chula Vista 1, La Mesa 3, National City 2, Oceanside 2, San Francisco 1, Santa Barbara 1, Sonoma County 3, Porterville 1. Ventura County 1.

### German Measles

173 cases: Alameda County 7, Alameda 4, Berkeley 11, Oakland 10, San Leandro 2, Colusa County 1, Contra Costa County 3, Martinez 3, Richmond 3, Fresno County 4, Humboldt County 1, Inyo County 3, Bishop 6, Lake County 1, Los Angeles County 5, Beverly Hills 1, Glendale 2, Inglewood 1, Long Beach 22, Los Angeles 17, Santa Monica 1, Whittier 1, Hawthorne 2, Pacific Grove 1, Salinas 1, Orange County 3, Anaheim 1, Huntington Beach 1, Newport Beach 1, Santa Ana 15, Riverside County 2, Sacramento 9, San Diego 4, San Francisco 18, San Bruno 1, Santa Barbara 1, Santa Clara County 2, Palo Alto 1, Tulare County 1.

### Influenza

659 cases: Berkeley 36, Oakland 14, Humboldt County 3, Kern County 222, Bakersfield 2, Hanford 6, Lake County 1, Los Angeles County 13, Beverly Hills 2, Claremont 3, Compton 1, Los Angeles 50, Pasadena 1, Mendocino County 1, Napa 1, Orange County 14, Riverside County 1, Riverside 3, Sacramento 7, San Benito County 50, San Bernardino County 1, San Diego County 18, San Francisco 28, San Joaquin County 1, Stockton 4, Burlingame 5, South San Francisco 1, Santa Barbara 3, Santa Clara County 58, Gilroy 68, Los Gatos 24, Mountain View 1, Sunnyvale 8, Willow Glen 3, Vallejo 1, Tulare 4.

### Measles

1423 cases: Alameda 1, Berkeley 25, Oakland 60, Piedmont 19, San Leandro 6, Amador County 4, Butte County 5, Chico 1, Gridley 17, Oroville 2, Colusa County 7, Contra Costa County 2, Richmond 3, Fresno County 25, Fresno 20, Selma 2, Humboldt County 2, Fortuna 1, Imperial County 2, Brawley 2, Calexico 9, Kern County 7, Los Angeles County 127, Alhambra 2, Covina 1, Culver City 7, El Monte 3, El Segundo 1, Glendale 2, Huntington Park 3, Inglewood 3, Los Angeles 207, Monrovia 2, Montebello 2, Pasadena 16, Pomona 3, Santa Monica 21, Lynwood 1, South Gate 6, Maywood 1, Bell 5, Gardena 6, Madera County 7, Madera 12, Marin County 6, San Rafael 7, Fort Bragg 11, Monterey County 9, Carmel 5, Monterey 8, Pacific Grove 1, Salinas 2, Napa County 3, Napa 9, Fullerton 5, Santa Ana 1, Riverside County 11, Riverside 21, Sacramento 12, North Sacramento 1, San Bernardino 21, Coronado 1, La Mesa 3, Oceanside 1, San Diego 9, San Francisco 294, San Joaquin County 11, Manteca 4, San Luis Obispo County 3, San Luis Obispo 1, Burlingame 8, Daly City 4, San Mateo 1, South San Francisco 21, Belmont 9, Santa Barbara County 6, Santa Barbara 9, Santa Maria 4, Santa Clara County 52, Gilroy 21, Los Gatos 7, Mountain View 9, San Jose 9, Santa Clara 1, Sunnyvale 32, Willow Glen 1, Santa Cruz County 4, Oakdale 1, Tulare County 2, Dinuba 1, Lindsay 1, Tulare 4, Tuolumne County 40, Ventura County 11, Fillmore 29, Santa Paula 6, Yolo County 5, Woodland 4, Yuba County 1.

### Mumps

557 cases: Alameda County 1, Alameda 1, Berkeley 4, Emeryville 1, Oakland 23, Piedmont 1, San Leandro 2, Amador County 3, Colusa County 8, Colusa 3, Pittsburg 3, Richmond 1, Walnut Creek 1, El Dorado County 1, Placerville 1, Fresno County 10, Fresno 17, Imperial County 1, Calexico 2, Kern County 20, Bakersfield 1, Kings County 1, Lake County 8, Los Angeles County 33, Alhambra 1, Claremont 8, Culver City 1, Long Beach 37, Los Angeles 78, Pasadena 1, Pomona 7, San Fernando 1, South Pasadena 1, Monterey Park 10, Marin County 1, Mendocino County 1, Fort Bragg 5, Monterey County 1, Napa County 1, Orange County 20, Santa Ana 5, Riverside County 23, Corona 28, Riverside 16, Sacramento 25, San Bernardino County 1, Ontario 1, Redlands 1, San Diego County 1, San Diego 4, San Francisco 9, San Joaquin County 3, Stockton 1, San Luis Obispo 2, Santa Barbara 3, Santa Clara County 2, Palo Alto 1, Santa Cruz County 3, Watsonville 13, Shasta County 1, Siskiyou County 2, Dunsmuir 59, Stanislaus County 9, Turlock 1, Patterson 4, Sutter County 2, Tehama County 1, Red Bluff 6, Tulare County 1, Lindsay 1, Tulare 1, Ventura County 3, Fillmore 1, Yolo County 1, Woodland 1.

### Pneumonia (Lobar)

127 cases: Alameda County 2, Oakland 6, Colusa County 1, Colusa 2, Fresno County 2, Reedley 1, Imperial County 2, Bakersfield 1, Los Angeles County 12, Alhambra 1, Glendale 4, Huntington Park 1, Long Beach 9, Los Angeles 36, Santa Monica 1, Whittier 1, Lynwood 2, Chowchilla 1, Napa 2, Fullerton 1, Riverside County 2, Riverside 6, San Diego 1, San Francisco 6, San Joaquin County 8, Lodi 1, Manteca 1, Stockton 4, San Luis Obispo 1, South San Francisco 1, Santa Barbara County 1, Santa Barbara 2, Gilroy 1, Palo Alto 1, Tulare County 2, Porterville 1.

### Scarlet Fever

434 cases: Alameda 3, Berkeley 3, Oakland 6, Piedmont 2, Amador County 3, Chico 2, Colusa 2, Concord 1, Richmond 1, Walnut Creek 1, El Dorado County 1, Placerville 4, Fresno County 7, Fresno 2, Eureka 1, Imperial County 1, Calexico 1, Bishop 1, Kern County 2, Taft 2, Kings County 2, Corcoran 3, Los Angeles County 21, Alhambra 5, Beverly Hills 1, Burbank 7, Covina 1, Glendale 6, Huntington Park 1, Inglewood 1, La Verne 1, Long Beach 6, Los Angeles 90, Monrovia 1, Pasadena 3, San Fernando 2, San Gabriel 1, Santa Monica 2, Sierra Madre 1, Whittier 1, Torrance 1, South Gate 2, Monterey Park 3, Maywood 1, Bell 1, Gardena 1, Madera County 3, Ross 1, Mendocino County 2, Monterey County 1, Napa County 1, Orange County 3, Anaheim 1, Brea 1, Huntington Beach 1, Orange 1, Santa Ana 2, Placentia 1, Riverside County 2, Riverside 2, Sacramento 13, San Bernardino County 4, Colton 2, Redlands 1, San Bernardino 3, San Diego County 5, National City 1, Oceanside 1, San Diego 29, San Francisco 85, San Joaquin County 3, Stockton 1, Tracy 1, San Luis Obispo County 1, San Mateo County 1, Daly City 1, Redwood City 2, Santa Barbara 1, Santa Clara County 2, San Jose 3, Santa Clara 1, Siskiyou County 6, Stanislaus County 4, Ceres 4, Turlock 2, Sutter County 1, Trinity County 2, Tulare County 1, Lindsay 2, Porterville 2, Ventura County 6, Oxnard 1, Yolo County 3, Woodland 1, Yuba County 2, Marysville 3.

### Smallpox

2 cases: Richmond.

### Typhoid Fever

4 cases: Imperial County 1, Kern County 1, Los Angeles County 1, Los Angeles 1.

### Whooping Cough

226 cases: Alameda County 1, Alameda 9, Berkeley 15, Oakland 9, Piedmont 1, Richmond 1, Kern County 2, Bakersfield 1, Los Angeles County 14, Beverly Hills 1, Compton 2, Long Beach 9, Los Angeles 27, Pasadena 1, South Gate 3, Monterey County 7, Monterey 1, Santa Ana 4, Placentia 1, Riverside County 2, Corona 1, Riverside 9, Sacramento County 1, Sacramento 11, Redlands 1, San Bernardino 1, San Diego County 1, San Diego 34, San Francisco 9, San Joaquin County 5, Lodi 4, Stockton 7, Tracy 15, San Luis Obispo County 3, Santa Barbara 1, Gilroy 1, San Jose 1, Santa Cruz County 3, Watsonville 2, Ventura County 2, Fillmore 3.

### Meningitis (Epidemic)

14 cases: Fresno 1, Imperial County 2, El Centro 1, Los Angeles County 2, Huntington Park 1, Los Angeles 2, Monterey Park 1, Riverside County 1, San Bernardino County 1, Dorris 1, Woodland 1.

### Pellagra

4 cases: Los Angeles 1, San Francisco 3.

### Poliomyelitis

2 cases: Los Angeles.

### Tetanus

One case: Bakersfield.

### Trachoma

24 cases: Madera County 21, Riverside County 2, San Diego 1.

### Encephalitis (Epidemic)

One case: Tulare.

### Food Poisoning

5 cases: Berkeley 1, San Francisco 4.

### Undulant Fever

8 cases: Compton 1, Los Angeles 1, Napa County 1, Orange 1, San Francisco 3, Corning 1.

### Coccidioidal Granuloma

One case: Kern County.

### Septic Sore Throat (Epidemic)

10 cases: Alameda 1, Los Angeles County 1, Pacific Grove 1, San Francisco 1, Stockton 1, Santa Cruz County 4, Santa Paula 1.

### Rabies (Animal)

24 cases: Fresno County 2, Los Angeles County 2, Glendale 1, Los Angeles 15, Lynwood 1, South Gate 1, San Diego 1, Lodi 1.

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